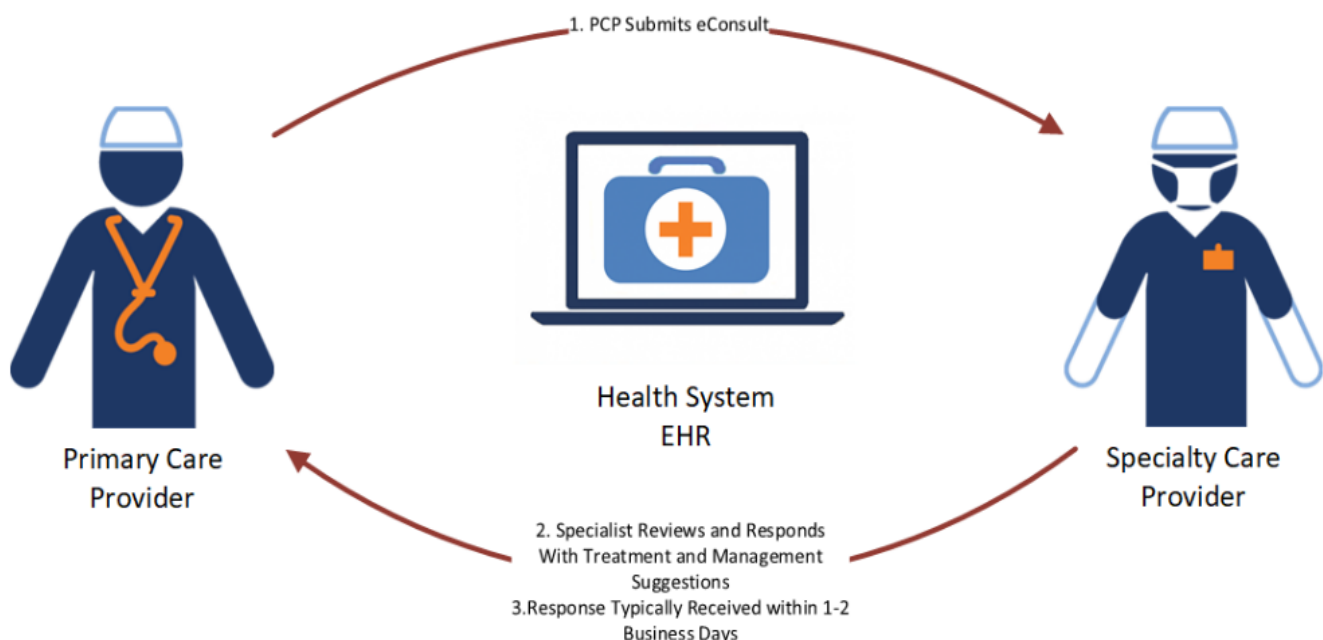# Fresno E-Consult Coalition Overview

Program Overview

Medi-Cal managed care organizations (MCOs) in Fresno county are working together to support clinics and health systems in the region by providing no-cost access to electronic consult (e-consult) to improve Medi-Cal patient access to specialty care and enhance care coordination between primary providers and specialists. The Fresno E-Consult Coalition is a group of community health centers, health systems, independent practice associations, clinic networks and MCOs working together to create an inclusive program to address implementation needs, streamline referral workflows and improve patient/member experiences. Unique aspects of the Coalition include:

- Payer collaboration to cover costs to make e-consult available to all providers and patients;
- Organizations working to resolve key issues and disseminate learnings to support program spread;
- Provider champion sharing of the benefits and value proposition of e-consult to facilitate use; and
- Shared tracking of progress and modeling of outcomes to sustain adoption.

What is an E-Consult?

- E-consults are asynchronous communications connecting PCPs with specialists to respond to their clinical questions, often making it possible for patients to avoid long wait times for face-to-face visits that may not be necessary.
- When face-to-face referral visits are recommended following an e-consult, these are enhanced by helping the PCP to provide all necessary tests and patient information in preparation for the visit.
- With most e-consults, the patient's problem can be managed by the PCP using the e-consult response. Patients for whom the specialist recommends a face-to-face visit will be referred to a local specialist.

1. PCP Submits eConsult

Health System
EHR

Primary Care
Provider

Specialty Care
Provider

2. Specialist Reviews and Responds
With Treatment and Management
Suggestions
3. Response Typically Received within 1-2
Business Days

Benefits of E-Consult

Analyses have shown timelier access to specialty input, decreased utilization and costs, and high patient and provider satisfaction with e-consults. Additional benefits[1] include the following:

- E-consult enables patients in **rural areas to access specialist care** that may not be available locally, **and increases access** to specialists, so the highest acuity patients are prioritized for in-person visits.
- E-consult supports practices to **optimize resources and reduce patient exposure during COVID-19**.
- For every specialty visit averted, **e-consults saved patients approximately $100** in avoided copays, transportation costs, and missed work.
- In a national survey, **81% of patients were satisfied with the specialists' e-consult recommendations** (the same as those with an in-person referral).
- In early clinician surveys, **89% of primary care providers and 89% of specialist consultants were satisfied** with the quality of e-consult questions and responses.

[2]

What is Required of Clinics and Health Care Organizations?

- Commit to participate in monthly Fresno E-Consult Coalition Roundtables.
- Provide Program Implementation Team (including clinician lead, program manager, and IT lead).
- There is no charge to provider organizations to participate in the program and conduct e-consults.
- If your organization is actively using e-consult and you would like to get engaged, please contact us to determine how Fresno county managed care organizations can support your program.

How Does an Organization Get Started with E-Consult?

Contact libby.sagara@bluepathhealth.com to get answers to your questions about the Fresno E-Consult Coalition and attend the next roundtable. Monthly roundtables offer opportunities to identify patient/member access needs, address provider questions, discuss implementation needs and define shared metrics for success.

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[1] Project CORE: Coordinating Optimal Referral Experiences, aamc.org
[2] www.confermed.com, 2020